

**District of Columbia Public Schools
Office of Academic Services
Local Educational Agency Office of Grants Program**



Local Educational Agency Parent Involvement Policy

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Development of the District of Columbia Public Schools Local Educational Agency Parent Involvement Policy For Title I Programs

I. Purpose

In accordance with the mandates of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, the purpose of this Parent Involvement Policy (Policy) is to encourage and facilitate full and meaningful parent participation in the District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS) Title I schools. This Policy establishes the framework for DCPS, the Local Education Agency (LEA or DCPS), and individual schools to implement parent involvement programs and activities that promote student achievement. The term 'parent' refers to a legal guardian or other person standing in *loco parentis* (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare). DCPS also believes in the important roles that the extended family and larger community play in a child's life and encourages and welcomes the full participation and involvement of the wider community in supporting our children and our schools.

The Policy supports regular and timely dissemination of information that promotes the full participation and involvement of parents and families in their children's education. The planning, implementation, and evaluation of parent involvement programs will directly involve parents of participating children. This Policy shall serve as written documentation of DCPS' commitment to ensure that parents and families are welcomed and valued as equal partners in their children's education.

II. General Statement of Policy

- A. It is the policy of DCPS to plan and implement programs, activities and procedures with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- B. It is the policy of DCPS to fully comply with *ESEA* and jointly develop with parents an acceptable parental involvement policy and distribute the written policy to parents of children participating in Title I programs.
- C. It is the policy of DCPS to plan and implement programs and activities that recognize that:
 - 1. All children are able to learn when given the opportunity to do so.
 - 2. Parents and families are an essential part of the education process.
 - 3. The participation of the entire community is necessary to foster a culture that encourages and supports student achievement.
- D. It is the policy of DCPS to focus its work on the following goals:

1. Maximize academic achievement for all students.
2. Efficiently and equitably distribute resources to address the needs of all students.
3. Improve parent and community engagement and public confidence in DCPS.

III. DCPS' LEA District Level Policy

DCPS adopts the definition of "parent involvement" set forth in the *ESEA* as the

participation of parents in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- That parents play an integral role in assisting their children's learning;
- That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education at school;
- That parents are full partners in their children's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
- The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the *ESEA*.

DCPS recognizes the need to deliver supports to schools and parents through myriad vehicles and forums. To that end, DCPS has established three parent resource centers that will deliver comprehensive programming and resources that are designed to help parents navigate the school system, enhance effective communication and collaboration between schools and families in support of student achievement, help parents advocate for high-quality teaching and learning and help parents partner with their children and their schools for academic success. In addition, DCPS also will work with school-based parent centers and community-based organizations to provide the same resources to parents, teachers and administrators. Through the provision of workshops, information sessions, written materials and classes, funded in part by one percent of DCPS' Title I allocation for parental involvement, DCPS will support strong parental involvement and will perform the following:

- A. Put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of DCPS' Title I schools, consistent with section 1118 of *ESEA*. DCPS will plan such programs and activities through collaboration with staff and parents at the participating schools.
- B. Consistent with section 1118, DCPS will work with the schools to provide them with the technical assistance and other support necessary to assist schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement policies and school-parent compacts that comply with *ESEA*. DCPS will provide sample templates and will work with schools to effectively use Title I funds for parental involvement activities agreed upon by the schools and their parents.

- C. Build schools' and parents' capacity for strong parent involvement by:
1. Providing assistance to parents in understanding topics such as academic standards, achievement benchmarks, assessments and how to partner with the school to improve student achievement.
 2. Complying with all "right to know" provisions set forth in section 1111 of *ESEA* and providing such information in various languages and formats as required.
 3. Providing training to teachers and school staff on how to develop and employ effective parent involvement strategies;
 4. Providing schools with research based literature on parent involvement best practices to enhance their professional libraries;
 5. Monitoring schools to ensure that parents are involved in school activities, as outlined in the *ESEA*; and
 6. Providing parents with the capacity-building services they need to effectively work with their children and their schools, such as literacy training, parenting skills, numeracy training and GED classes.
- D. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Even Start, the Parents as Teachers Program, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and public preschool programs and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as the DCPS parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
- E. Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools, including identifying barriers to participation by parents with particular attention being given to parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency or are members of linguistically and culturally diverse communities. This evaluation will survey principals, teachers, partner organizations and parents and will be conducted by the Research and Evaluation Division within the Educational Accountability Office and will assess the following:
- whether families are more aware of the level of performance expected of their children and the materials that their children need to learn in order to succeed in school.
 - whether school-parent compacts are addressing academic and communication goals and are being used to improve the school/family partnership.
 - whether families are becoming more involved in school decisions covered under Title I parent involvement - such as developing school-wide plans, Title I policy statements, and compacts and deciding how to use Title I funds to strengthen family involvement - and that schools are more open and responsive to parent involvement.

- whether trainings and resources to promote parental involvement and parental capacity building are widely available and helpful in assisting families and driving student achievement
- whether families with limited English proficiency and members of linguistically and culturally diverse communities are appropriately being served.
- whether parents view their schools as more open and responsive to their involvement.

DCPS will distribute the results of the evaluation and will use the evaluation findings, as necessary, to design strategies for more effective district-wide and school-level parental involvement activities and policies.

- F. Establish partnerships with community-based organizations, such as the DC PIRC, that provide parental involvement training and services to assist schools with parent involvement.
- G. Provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, members of linguistically and culturally diverse communities and migratory parents. DCPS will have key documents translated into multiple languages and provide interpretation services as necessary. DCPS will provide all such documentation in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in language that is understandable by parents.
- H. Include parent comments when submitting the Policy to the State if DCPS' Policy is not satisfactory to the parents of participating Title I children.

IV. Development of School Level Policy

On an annual basis, DCPS will direct the administration of each school to develop, or amend an existing parent involvement policy. The school and its Title I parent will joint develop an acceptable policy and will distribute the written policy to parents of participating children, consistent with section 1118 of *ESEA*.

- A. In developing the school's parental involvement policy, or performing the annual review/update, each school shall perform the following:
 - 1. Hold an annual meeting with parents at a convenient time, invite and encourage all parents to attend and inform all attendees of the following:
 - a. the school's development of the policy;
 - b. the requirements of Section 1118; and
 - c. the parents right to participate in the development of the policy.
 - 2. Offer a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening. The school may provide, with the Title I parental engagement funds, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement;
 - 3. Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning,

review, and improvement of programs for parental involvement, including the planning, review, and improvement of the Policy and the joint development of the Title I school wide program plan (Local School Plan).

4. Provide parents with:
 - a. timely information about parental involvement programs;
 - b. a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency level students are expected to meet; and
 - c. if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
 5. If the Local School Plan is not satisfactory to the parents, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the LEA Grant Office.
- B. An additional component of the policy is a written school-parent compact that each school must jointly develop with the parents. A school-parent compact is a written agreement between the school and the parents that outlines how the parents, the entire school staff and the students will share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement, as well as how the school and the parents will partner together to help all children achieve the District's high academic standards. Specifically, the school-parent compact must include the following:
1. a description of the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in an environment that supports and facilitates learning and enables students to meet the District's high academic standards, as well as the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their child's education such as:
 - a. monitoring the attendance of their child;
 - b. ensuring homework completion;
 - c. volunteering in their child's classroom; and
 - d. as appropriate, participating in decisions relating to the education of their child and the positive use of out-of-school time.
 2. address the importance of effective and on-going communication between teachers and parents through, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools (at least annually) during which the compact is discussed as it relates to individual student achievement;

- b. frequent reports to parents on their child's progress; and
- c. reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's classroom and observation of classroom activities.

Each school annually will distribute its parent involvement policy in an understandable format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents and families can understand. The policy will be made available to the local community and updated periodically with the involvement of parents and families to meet the changing needs of parents and schools.

Attachment A

School Parent Involvement Policy

SAMPLE TEMPLATEⁱ

***NOTE:** In support of strengthening student academic achievement, each school that receives Title I, Part A funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy that contains information required by section 1118 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (parent involvement policy).*

*Schools, in consultation with parents, may use the sample template below as a framework for the information to be included in their parent involvement policy. **Schools are not required to follow this sample template or framework. If they establish the school's expectations for parent involvement and include all of the components listed under "Description of How a School Will Implement Required School Parent Involvement Policy Components" they will have incorporated the information that section 1118 requires in the school parent involvement policy.** Schools, in consultation with parents, are encouraged to include other relevant and agreed upon activities and actions that will support effective parent involvement and strengthen student academic achievement.*

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PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS (Sample Template)

NOTE: There is no required format for written expectations; this is a sample of what might be included.

The **name of school** agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- Consistent with section 1118, the school will work to ensure that the required school level parent involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118 of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- Schools will notify parents of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. The policy will be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A, parent involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of NCLB in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in language parents understand.
- If the schoolwide program plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1114(b) of NCLB, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school will submit any

parent comments with the plan when the school submits the plan to the local educational agency (school district).

- The school will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school will build its own and the parent's capacity for strong parent involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement.
- The school will provide other reasonable support for parent involvement activities under section 1118 of NCLB as the parents may request.
- The school will be governed by the following statutory definition of parent involvement, and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;

(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;

(C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;

(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of NCLB.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW SCHOOLS WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS (Sample Template)

NOTE: The School Parent Involvement Policy must include a description of how the school will implement or accomplish each of the following components. *[Section 1118, NCLB.]* There is no required format for these descriptions. However, regardless of the format the school chooses to use, a description of each of the following components below must be included in order to satisfy statutory requirements.

1. The **name of school** will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its school parent involvement policy under section 1118 of NCLB:

(List actions)

Examples:

- PTA will nominate parents to serve on a Parent Partnership Committee to meet periodically with the Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT).
2. The **name of school** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of NCLB:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The Parent Partnership Committee will serve on the principal's advisory board in addition to the LSRT during the development of school and budget plans.
- The school will provide for parents to participate in professional development activities that increase parent capacity to aid the academic development of their children.

3. The **name of school** will hold an annual meeting to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, and to explain the Title I, Part A requirements and the right of parents to be involved in Title I, Part A programs. The school will convene the meeting at a time convenient for parents and will offer a flexible number of additional parent involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening, so that as many parents as possible are able to attend. The school will invite all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs to this meeting, and will encourage them to attend, by:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will establish a calendar of beginning-of-the-year meetings during weekdays and weekends to offer parent flexibility.

4. The **name of the school** will provide parents of participating children information in a timely manner about Title I, Part A programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet by:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will utilize the annual Back to School Night Program to communicate transparently Title I programs, the thrust of the school's curriculum, and forms of academic assessment.
- The school will send via postal and electronic mail an explanation of the school's Title I programs, the thrust of the school's curriculum, and forms of academic assessment.

5. The **name of the school** will at the request of parents, provide opportunities for regular meetings for parents to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible by ____:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will develop a section on the website dedicated to parent feedback and surveys.
- The principal will host a monthly breakfast for parents to voice concerns.
- The school will utilize the services of DCPS high school students to provide translation and child care services.

6. The **name of the school** will provide each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least math, language arts and reading by:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will provide the report in a language that each parent can understand.
7. The **name of school** will take the following actions to provide each parent timely notice when their child has been assigned or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified within the meaning of the term in section 200.56 of the Title I Final Regulations (67 Fed. Reg. 71710, December 2, 2002) by:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will utilize the Office of Human Resources as a resource to ensure the timely notification of parents of children who have been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.
8. The **name of school** will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school, as appropriate, in understanding topics by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph:
- the State's academic content standards,
 - the State's student academic achievement standards,
 - the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
 - the requirements of Part A,
 - how to use effectively use and understand their child's textbooks;
 - how to monitor their child's progress, and
 - how to work with educators and other school staff members.

(List activities, such as workshops, conferences, classes, both in-state and out-of-state, including any equipment or other materials that may be necessary to ensure success.)

9. The **name of school** will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parent involvement, by:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will include a contingent of parents in at least one conference which focuses on improved student achievement and develop a sustainability plan with parents to ensure that essential learnings are implemented and shared with the school community.
 - The school will use the district's resources to produce a newsletter of strategies for parents to participate more fully in their children's education.
10. The **name of school** will, with the assistance of its parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will hold annual professional development on customer service for all staff

- members (non-negotiable).
 - The school will hold a monthly parent breakfast to establish and maintain teacher-parent rapport.
 - The school will devote a portion of its Title I funds to workshops that focus on growing parent partnerships.
11. The **name of school** will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, public preschool, and other programs. The school will also conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

(List action.s)

Examples:

- Allotting a percentage of Title I monies to the maintenance and improvement of the parent resource center.
 - The school will offer family literacy services.
12. The **name of school** will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

(List actions)

Examples:

- The school will develop an e-mail database of parents and send correspondences via postal mail, as well as electronically
- The school will develop and maintain a school website which informs parents of all upcoming events.
- The school will use district resources to translate correspondences as needed.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY SCHOOL PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS (Sample Template)

NOTE: The School Parent Involvement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of NCLB:

School also will work on completing the following:

- involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;
- providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training;

- paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, arrange meetings with parents who are unable to attend conferences at school in order to maximize parent involvement and participation in their children's education;
- adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parent involvement;
- establishing a school parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parent involvement in Title I, Part A programs;
- developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parent involvement activities.

* * * * *

PART IV. ADOPTION (Sample Template)

This School Parent Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by _____.

This policy was adopted by the **name of school** on **date** and will be in effect for the period of _____. The school will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before **date**.

(Signature of Authorized Official)

(Date)

Attachment B

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

*SAMPLE TEMPLATE*ⁱⁱ

*NOTE: Schools and parents may use the sample template below as a framework for the information to be included in their school-parent compact. Schools and parents are not required to follow this sample template or framework. If they include all of the bolded items listed under “Required School-Parent Compact Provisions” below, they will have incorporated all of the information required by section 1118(d) to be in the school-parent compact. Schools and parents, in consultation with students, are encouraged to include other relevant and agreed upon activities and actions as well that will support effective parent involvement and strengthen student academic achievement. **Remember, the school-parent compact must be included in the school parent involvement policy.***

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SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

The **name of school** and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State’s high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during the _____ school year.

REQUIRED SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT PROVISIONS

Provisions bolded in this section are required to be in the Title I, Part A school-parent compact.

School Responsibilities

The **name of school** will:

1. **Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State’s student academic achievement standards as follows:**

[Describe how the school will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction, and do so in a supportive and effective learning environment.]

2. **Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child’s achievement. Specifically, those conferences will be held:**

[Describe when the parent-teacher conferences will be held.]

3. **Provide parents with frequent reports on their children’s progress.** Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:

[Describe when and how the school will provide reports to parents.]

4. **Provide parents reasonable access to staff.** Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:

[Describe when, where, and how staff will be available for consultation with parents.]

5. **Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities,** as follows:

[Describe when and how parents may volunteer, participate, and observe classroom activities.]

Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

Describe the ways in which parents will support their children's learning, such as:

- Monitoring attendance.
- Ensuring that homework is completed and that child reads for at least 30 minutes daily.
- Monitoring amount of television children watch and amount of time spent playing video games.
- Volunteering in child's classroom.
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child's education.
- Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.
- Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.
- Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school's School Improvement Team, the Title I Policy Advisory Committee, the District-wide Policy Advisory Council, the State's Committee of Practitioners, the School Support Team or other school advisory or policy groups.

Student Responsibilities (revise as appropriate to grade level)

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

Describe the ways in which students will support their academic achievement, such as:

- Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need it.
- Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.
- Give my parents or the adult who is responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school every day.

School

Date

Parent

Date

Student

Date

Attachment C

Office of LEA Grant Programs

Action Plan for Title I Parent Involvement

School Name: _____

Project Title: _____

Grant Number: TL16RT/08

Principal Name: _____

Principal Signature: _____

Detailed Activities	Implementation timeline	Nature of Expenditures (personnel, contracts, training, equipment)	Action Steps to Implement	Amount	Goal/Objective
Project Total					
